

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Representative Melissa Bean (IL-8) today voted in favor of HR 810, the "STEM CELL RESEARCH ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005," a bill that expands scientific research that utilizes excess human embryonic stem cells that would otherwise be destroyed, regardless of the date on which the stem cells were derived. The bipartisan bill passed by 238 to 194. Bean's statement:

"Millions of Americans, and thousands of my constituents, have invested their hopes in stem cell research and its enormous potential. My strong support for this legislation is driven by scientific logic and basic human decency. When science opens a door that may alleviate the suffering of millions and prolong their lives, I refuse to slam it shut.

"I will continue to stand with the 12-year-old boy in Gurnee enduring juvenile diabetes, the 60-year old Schaumburg woman confronting Alzheimer's, the young mother fighting breast cancer, and the millions other Americans who are battling disease with a courage we all pray we will never need.

"By easing the existing restrictions that are stifling stem cell research and hindering the medical community's attempts to be the preeminent innovator of this technology, this legislation represents a compassionate long-overdue advance in the battle against disease and for scientific progress. Countless families have looked to Congress to embrace their optimism and support their belief in a healthy future, and I was not going to let them down."

The "STEM CELL RESEARCH ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005," broadens the availability of federal funding for embryonic stem cell research, while imposing strong ethical regulations on the source and use of the surplus embryos that are used in the research. Bean also supported HR 2520, the "STEM CELL THERAPEUTIC AND RESEARCH ACT OF 2005," which expands federal support for research using adult stem cells. That bill passed by a vote of 431-1.

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